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**BOOKER WASHINGTON,
SCHOLAR, ORATOR, LEADER.**

IN Booker Washington the country loses not only a leader, but one who was in his person a real triumph of democracy. Born a slave, in the aftermath of the war he even slept under the wooden pavements of Richmond, a wail and stray, keeping body and soul together as best he could, but burning with the thirst for education and the desire to get ahead in the world. A colored friend of Dr. Washington's, Richard R. Wright, when also a ragged urchin, answered in Reconstruction days, a Northern general, who asked what message he should take back to the North, with the words: "Tell 'em we're a-risin', master." Both these boys did rise—to the headship of great educational institutions; but Dr. Washington had the gift of oratory in addition to pluck, ambition, and an innate talent for leadership, and so he forged along until by a single speech in Georgia, he achieved national renown. It was Gen. Armstrong, if we recall rightly, who said that if Hampton had done nothing else but graduate Booker Washington, it would have justified its existence and all the labor and money spent upon it.

If there was any secret of his success in overcoming the terrible obstacles which confront every man of color, it lay surely in his unflinching hopefulness, his dogged determination to let no obstacle daunt him, and to be himself above insult and humiliation. He was big enough to see early in life that the man who flouts another because of some difference in natural attributes, injures himself, and not the object of his venom. No disappointment could discourage him; if one benefactor dropped out, he found another for the place; if his audiences were small and the returns disappointing, why, there were other audiences to be found. And so he speedily typified in his person all the great work that Hampton and Tuskegee and a host of other schools were doing for his race, and proved beyond dispute that work of bringing light to those that would otherwise sit in darkness earns enormous dividends, not only for the blacks, but for the entire Republic. Thus thousands who heard him speak realized for the first time what talents, what possibilities of individual usefulness, lie latent among our colored fellow-citizens, and others found in his "Up from Slavery" a real tract for democracy and for the brotherhood of man. A Southern professor nearly lost his position for saying that two colored men, Washington and Du Bois, had written the two greatest books that have come out of the South since the Civil War, but the inaccuracy of his statement has yet to be proved; two more moving human documents are not often the product of trial and suffering.

And so it came about that Booker Washington gradually became the foremost interpreter of one race to another, particularly in the South. When the final verdict is passed upon his achievements, this may well prove to be his greatest claim to renown. Certainly of late years the trips he has taken into the various Southern States, when thousands of both races gathered to hear him wherever he stopped, have been of the utmost value. No one is quite so ignorant of negro aspirations and achievements as the Southerner of the average small town, whose horizon is limited by the negroes he sees upon the street corners. To these Dr. Washington brought a message that opened many an eye and won many a heart. True, he was extremely diplomatic; yet he did not lack courage, for he was never swayed by the threatening letters that often rained upon him. He would not take a guard, and unattended he would go by corners at which he had been told he would be shot like a dog if he dared appear. And, withal, his modest bearing, together with his great devotion to his cause, won him friends wherever he went. Here in the North the doors of many a home swung open to him.

Yet he was not the standard-bearer of a united race. It is a rare education leader who does not compromise on some questions, and in his peculiarly trying position, where a single false step might mean the ruining of his work—even the burning of his school—Dr. Washington did not speak out on the things which the intellectual men of the race deemed of far greater moment than bricks and mortar, industrial education, or business leagues—the matter of their social and political liberties. He was silent by choice in the face of many a crying wrong and bitter injustice, and more and more colored men came to resent it. They would not have objected had he, like other heads of schools, kept out of politics and assumed no leadership beyond that of the field of industrial training. But when they saw him, under Taft and Roosevelt, a powerful political factor in the White House, when they



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**Brutal Treatment
of Belgians
by Germans**

SOME rather astonishing information found its way into certain United States newspapers last week concerning the character of German government in that part of Belgium which is temporarily in Germany's hands. We were told that German rule was benevolent, that Belgium was a humming hive of industry, and the Belgian population which had not made the mistake of fleeing before the invaders was rapidly returning to that condition of prosperity that was theirs before the war. Astonishing information certainly was, for we knew too much of German rule in Alsace-Lorraine and Poland in peace time to expect the almost idyllic condition pictured for us in this "special correspondence." Presumably from Belgium itself.

A very different and, we imagine, somewhat more accurate picture of Belgium under German rule is presented in a report of conditions there brought back by Doctor Howard McClenahan, dean of the College of Princeton University, who has just returned from the stricken country. Doctor McClenahan had unusual opportunities for seeing things as they exist. Moreover, he might have been excused had his view been taken slightly from a German angle. He carried letters from Dr. Dernburg and Count von Bernstorff, and while in Belgium was the recipient of marked courtesies from von Bissing, military governor of Belgium and murderer of Edith Cavell.

But the American saw things with a clear eye and the tale he has to tell puts an end forever to any idea of German benevolence in the treatment of her victim. He visited Mons, Charleroi, Fosse, Dinant, Namur, Juys, Liege, Tirlemont, Louvain, Malines and Antwerp.

He finds that the Germans have removed—or stolen—from Belgium all machines, tools, lathes, milling machines, etc. Factories everywhere have been stripped to the bare walls and their equipment carried off to Germany. Raw material likewise has been removed wherever it could be found, and no more can be procured because of the blockade. So that the nation rich reached its highest degree of prosperity through manufacturing, suddenly finds itself completely stripped not only of the materials, but the tools with which to pursue its occupations. There is, however, one important exception. Factories for the further wrecking of Belgium are running in full blast. The Belgians, however, show what is, to the German mind, an unaccountable aversion to working in them, and prefer to starve.

And starve they may so far as Germany is concerned. From the beginning she has made no attempt to feed the conquered population, for which she is by all the rules of decency responsible. The world knows the magnificent work done by the United States last winter. Doctor McClenahan is authority for the statement that that work will have to be carried on with undiminished vigor this winter, for the people are "unclothed and unshod." The Germans allow food into the country only under control of Americans. This year's crop will last only five months with the most rigid economy, or less than half the time until another harvest can be gathered.

And besides these physical ills from which they suffer the unhappy Belgians are subjected to penning insults and indignities. Carcolling German officers drive pedestrians from sidewalk to roadway at the risk of death under their chargers' hoofs. At any hour of the day or night, without any display of reason or authority other than brute force, a Belgian may be spirited away to Germany, perhaps never to return. Doctor McClenahan tells of one man who at the point of a revolver was forced from the bedside of his wife, who was critically ill, at three o'clock in the morning and transported to Germany. Absolutely no explanation was given for this action.

In the words of the Princeton Dean, "Brutal, unfeeling military terrorism seems to be the sole motive for the policy followed." His report should give the final quietus to any stories of German kindness to subjected populations. And what Germany has done to Belgium she would do elsewhere.

Lincoln's freedmen the shackles of ignorance, oppression, prejudice, and injustice with which the race that vaunts itself superior still fetters them.—The Nation.

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